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BEN JONSON'S TESTIMONY AS TO WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: WHAT HE REALLY SAID AND WHAT HE DID NOT SAY, BUT WHAT OTHERS HAVE SUPPOSED HE SAID.

Ben Jonson speaks of Shakespeare only four times in the whole of his works: (1) in the verses accompanying the woodcut of Shakespeare in the folio of 1623; (2) in the laudatory poem prefixed to the same folio and entitled "To the memory of my beloved, the author, Mr. William Shakespeare, and what he hath left us" (in Gifford's edition of Jonson's works this is changed, on what authority I know not, "To the memory of my beloved master, William Shakspeare," &c.); (3) in a brief passage in the prose, "Discoveries;" (4) in his conversations with Drummond, of Hawthornden. Not one of these things was written or spoken during Shakespeare's lifetime. The earliest is very probably the statement to Drummond, which must have been made in 1619, three years after Shakespeare's death. Next came the poems in the folio, which must have been written in or before 1622. Last came the passage in the "Discoveries," which seems to speak of Shakespeare as long dead, and occurs in company with passages that mention Bacon's death. We shall therefore consider Jonson's evidence in this order.

"Jonson," writes Drummond, "said Shakespeare wanted art and sometimes sense, for, in one of his plays, he brought in a number of men, saying they had suffered shipwreck in Bohemia, where is no sea near by a hundred miles." These, of course, are not exactly Jonson's words, but they convey the impression left upon a very scholarly and intelligent man by his conversation regarding Shakespeare. We can hardly doubt that they express Jonson's real opinion. He looked upon Shakespeare as a man without art, that is, a man ignorant of the poetic, or rather, the dramatic art. It must be borne in mind in this connection that Jonson was in no way hostile to

Shakespeare (the story of his life-long jealousy is an absurd myth). And, indeed, he had no reason to be, for during almost his whole life he was more popular as a dramatist than Shakespeare and more of a favorite at court.

About 1622, the editors of the first folio must have called upon Jonson to write a panegyric on Shakespeare for their forthcoming work, and Jonson complied; writing also a few lines on the woodcut that adorned the frontispiece. They furnish an excellent example of the eulogistic poetry of that time, and show what value we are to set upon it. The woodcut is a wretched affair, both in matter and in manner; and yet Jonson tells us that it was "for gentle Shakespeare cut," and that "the graver had a strife With nature to outdo the life." This is a mere publisher's puff, intended to make the book sell. And it is not the only puff of the kind in the volume. The editors' address, "To the great Variety of Readers," begins "From the most able to him that can but spell;—there you are number'd. We had rather you were weighed, especially when the fate of all bookes depends upon your capacities, and not of your heads alone, but of your purses. Well! It is now publique, and you wil stand for your priviledges wee know; to read and censure. Do so, but buy it first. That doth best commend a booke, the stationer saies. Then, how odde soever your braines be, or your wisedomes, make you licence the same and spare not. Judge your sixe-pen'orth, your shillings worth, your five shillings worth at a time, or higher, so you rise to the just rates, and welcome. But, whatever you do, buy. Censure will not drive a trade or make the jacke go." It is quite plain that the book was a "stationer's" speculation, and that all the panegyrics were got up to make it sell. I say "all," because there are others besides that of Ben Jonson.

Jonson begins his poem by disclaiming any intention of drawing envy upon Shakespeare's name by overpraise. Then follows an elaborate eulogium—as poetry one of the finest in any language. Shakespeare is a "monument without a tombe," superior not only to all modern dramatists, but to all ancient ones likewise:

> He was not of an age, but for all time!
> And all the Muses still were in their prime,
> When, like Apollo, he came forth to warme
> Our eares, or like a Mercury to charme!
> Nature herselfe was proud of his designes,
> And joy'd to weare the dressing of his lines,

Which were so richly spun and woven so fit,
As, since, she will vouchsafe no other wit.
The merry Greeke, tart Aristophanes.
Neat Terence, witty Plautus, now not please,
But antiquated and deserted lye,
As they were not of Nature's family.
Yet must I not give Nature all; thy art,
My gentle Shakespeare, must enjoy a part;
For though the poet's matter Nature be,
His art doth give the fashion! and that he
Who casts to write a living line must sweat,
Such as thine are, and strike the second heat
Upon the Muse's anvile; turne the same
And himselfe with it, that he thinkes to frame;
Or for the lawrell he may gaine a scorne,
For a good poet's made as well as borne,
And such wert thou. Looke how the father's face
Lives in his issue; even so the race
Of Shakespeare's minde and manners brightly shines
In his well-torned and true-filed lines,
In each of which he seems to shake a lance
As brandish't at the eyes of ignorance.

This is a most curious passage, for several reasons: (1) Because it flatly contradicts Jonson's statement to Drummond that Shakespeare had no art; (2) because it contradicts the frequent assertion of the actors (see below) that Shakespeare never blotted a line; (3) because it gives evidence that Jonson was trying to write a brilliant panegyric, rather than to tell the truth. This is especially apparent in the puerile pun on Shakespeare's name in the last line but one. Having complimented his mind and manners—how sincerely we shall see further on—Jonson tries to squeeze a compliment out of his name. But, it may be said, after all, and with all deductions made, Jonson evidently considered Shakespeare not only a dramatic writer, but the greatest of dramatic writers. As to the first point, there can be no doubt, unless we suppose that he knowingly lied. Jonson, like the public of his time, believed Shakespeare to be the author of the plays printed under his name in the folio. About the second there is more than a doubt. That Jonson's praise was a mere matter of form is clear from the fact that he is ready to bestow it with equal munificence upon other poets. For example, he says of Beaumont:

"I confess it Beaumont's booke to be
The bound, the frontier of our poetrie,
And doth deserve all muniments of praise
That art, or ingine, on the strength can raise."

No praise could exceed this, unless it were what he says of Drayton, whom he compares to Orpheus, Homer, Virgil and all the greatest names he can think of.

What I am trying to show here is that Jonson's panegyric does not prove him to have had any very intimate acquaintance with Shakespeare—any more than had Digges and Holland, who wrote the other panegyrics. We can not suppose his praise of Shakespeare himself to have been more genuine that his praise of Shakespeare's portrait, which was a mere puff, plainly not founded on knowledge.

We now come to the last passage in Jonson's writings relating to Shakespeare. It runs as follows:

"I remember, the players have often mentioned it as an honour to Shakespeare, that in his writing (whatsoever he penned) he never blotted out a line. My answer hath been, would he had blotted a thousand, which they thought a malevolent speech. I had not told posterity this, but for their ignorance, who chose that circumstance to commend their friend by, wherein he most faulted: and to justify mine own candour: for I loved the man, and do honour his memory, on this side idolatry, as much as any. He was (indeed) honest, and of an open and free nature; had an excellent phantasy, brave notions and gentle expressions; wherein he flowed with that facility, that sometimes it was necessary he should be stopped: Sufflaminandus erat, as Augustus said of Haterius. His wit was in his own power, would the rule of it had been so too. Many times he fell into those things, could not escape laughter: as when he said in the person of Cæsar, one speaking to him: 'Cæsar, thou dost me wrong.' He replied, 'Cæsar did never wrong, but with just cause,' and such like, which were ridiculous. But he redeemed his vices with his virtues. There was more in him to be praised than to be pardoned." (It is hardly necessary to say to readers of Shakespeare that the obnoxious line does not occur in "Julius Cæsar" as we now possess it, but has been altered to, "Know Cæsar doth not wrong, nor without cause will he be satisfied." This change was probably due to Jonson himself, who seems to have revised the play. He atferwards held up the offending phrase to ridicule in his "Staple

of News," a comedy written about 1625, nine years after Shakespeare's death.)

There can be no doubt that the above is Jonson's final and genuine estimate of Shakespeare. We see that he returns to his assertion that Shakespeare had no art, or to what amounts to the same thing, viz., that the rule of his wit—that is, his intelligence—was not in his own power. We see also that Jonson had been accused by the actors of malevolence toward Shakespeare for his rather sharp speech, and he defends himself by saying that he was only speaking the truth and that he "loved" Shakespeare and "honoured his memory, on this side idolatry, as much as any." Now we know that "love" in those days meant nothing more than "like" does in ours. We find Jonson signing his letters to Drummond with "Your most true friend and lover," and one to his old schoolmaster, Camden, with "Your true lover," and so on. How far Jonson's "honour" for Shakespeare's memory lay "on this side idolatry" we discover when he tells us that "there was more in him to be praised than to be pardoned." Not a very enthusiastic testimonial, surely!

But the most remarkable thing in the above passage is the opening sentence. Jonson remembers that the players "often mentioned it as an honour to Shakespeare that in his writing he never blotted out a line." Jonson either knew, or he did not, whether this statement of the players was true or not; and, as a matter of fact, it was utterly untrue, for no son of woman could write such a masterpiece as Mark Antony's speech, the most consummate piece of rhetoric known to me, without blotting out many lines. And this, in general, Jonson well knew, as we learn from his panegyric. It seems perfectly clear that, if Jonson had known, of his own knowledge, Shakespeare's habits of writing, or had seen the original MSS., he could have flatly contradicted the assertion of the players, as he virtually does in his panegyric. But the question comes to be: How did the players ever come to make the assertion? Either because Shakespeare had boasted to them about his rapidty of composition or else because they had seen his original MSS. Now, if Shakespeare was in the habit of speaking about his literary habits, it is inconceivable that he should not have spoken of them to Jonson himself, supposing that they were intimate friends, as is generally taken for granted. If, on the other hand, the players based their assertion upon the MSS. furnished by Shakespeare for the stage, this would at best show that he copied the parts for the actors, not that he wrote the plays. It is, moreover, almost incredible that a man with a handwriting like that of Shakespeare should have written any great amount, or have been allowed

to copy the actors' parts. We may be perfectly sure that if the original furnished to the stage was Shakespeare's autograph, it had many blotted lines; whereas, if Shakespeare bought the plays from their author, he would very probably have insisted upon having a fairy copy. That the acted play was often widely divergent from the written one we know for certain.

What I have written shows, I think, that we have no right to conclude from Jonson's various and sometimes contradictory utterances regarding Shakespeare that he was very intimately acquainted with him, or knew anything about his literary habits. All we can fairly say is this: Ben Jonson knew Shakespeare personally and, though impressed with his ebullient and brilliant conversation, considered him a very mixed character and a man without the makings of a dramatic artist. When, however, he came to look through a collection of the plays attributed to Shakespeare, he could not deny that these contained much art that must have cost the author sweat, and so in his panegyric he ascribes great artistic ability to him.

There is not the slightest trustworthy evidence to show that Jonson and Shakespeare were ever very intimate or much together. All the stories about their frequent meetings at the Mermaid Tavern are utterly mythical. There is nothing to show that Shakespeare ever was inside any tavern in London, though doubtless he often was.

The simple truth is, we know nothing about the relations between Jonson and Shakespeare beyond what the former has chosen to tell us, and that is in reality very little. It follows that Jonson's testimony with regard to the authorship of the Shakespearian plays has no more weight than that of any other writer of the time. Jonson shared what no one doubts was the common opinion—that Shakespeare wrote the plays attributed to him. He also knew Shakespeare personally and thought he had more virtues than vices.

It may be worth while in this connection to quote what Jonson says of Bacon: "There happened in my time one noble speaker, who was full of gravity in his speaking. His language (where he could spare or pass by a jest) was nobly censorious. No man ever spoke more neatly, more pressly, more weightily, or suffered less emptiness, less idleness, in what he uttered. No member of his speech but consisted of his own graces. His hearers could not cough, or look aside from him without loss. He commanded where he spoke, and had his judges angry and pleased at his devotion. No man had their affections more in his power. The fear of every man that heard

him was, lest he should make an end." Was not the author of Mark Antony's speech such an one?

Elsewhere Jonson says of Bacon: "My conceit of his person was never increased toward him by his place or honours; but I have and do reverence him, for the greatness that was only proper to himself, in that he seemed to me ever, by his work, one of the greatest men, and most worthy of admiration that hath been in many ages. In his adversity I ever prayed that God would give him strength, for greatness he could not want. Neither could I condole in a word or syllable for him, as knowing no accident could do harm to virtue, but rather help to make it manifest."

Dr. Appleton Morgan devotes a chapter in his "Shakespearean Myth" to an analysis of the Jonsonian testimony which is well worth perusal. In it he says, "when Jonson died in 1637, he left behind him memoranda published in 1640 under the title "Timber or Discoveries." One of these memoranda—for the work is in the form of a commonplace book of desultory entries,—is a comment on the illustrious men whom Jonson had been contemporary with. The reader will search it in vain for the name "Shakespeare." This entry is as follows:

"Cicero is said to be the only wit that the people of Rome had equalled to their empire. We have had many, and in their several ages (to take in the former saeculum). Sir Thomas More the older Wyatt, Henry Earl of Surrey, Chaloner, Smith, B. Gardner, were for their times, admirable, and the more because they began eloquence with us. Sir Nicholas Bacon was singular and almost alone in the beginning of Elizabeth's time. Sir Philip Sidney and Mr. Hooker (in different matter), grew great masters of wit and language, and in whom all vigor of invention and strength of judgment met. The Earl of Essex, noble and high, and Sir Walter Raleigh, not to be contemned either for judgment or style. Sir Henry Saville grave and truly lettered, Sir Edwin Sandys excellent in both Lord Egerton a grave and great orator and best when he was provoked. But his learned and noble but unfortunate successor is he that hath filled up all numbers and performed that in our tongue which may be compared or referred either to insolent Greece or haughty Rome ———. So that he may be named and stand as the mark and acme of our language."

And then Dr. Morgan goes on to wonder whether Jonson, when he wrote this entry, had entirely forgoten that fourteen years before he had stated in rhyme that a certain William Shakespeare was "Soul of the age"—"not for an age but for all time" and his works "such as neither man nor muse can praise too much." He might have forgotten the name "Wil-

liam Shakespeare" as Emerson forgot the name of his friend Longfellow. But he had not forgotten the verses he wrote in his eulogy of Shakespeare, for whereas he had fourteen years before said that Shakespeare was greater in comparison

> Of all that insolent Greece or haughty Rome
> Sent forth or since did from their ashes come

he (Ben Jonson) now asserts that it was Lord Bacon, the acme of our language, was the one "that hath performed that in our tongue which may be compared or preferred to either to Insolent Greece or haughty Rome."

Clearly Ben Jonson was not a very ardent or faithful friend to William Shakespeare! Dr. Morgan's suggestion of an explanation is that Bacon and Shakespeare were, to Ben Jonson's knowledge one and the same person, and that Shakespeare, being dead there was no use to mention anybody but Bacon. But I am not at present going into that!

THOMAS DAVIDSON.

BACON—THE RIVER WYE—AND CHEPSTOW.

Had the cryptogrammatic American gentlemen, who, prudently accompanied by an alienist, has been lately excavating under water in this vicinity, been a linguist he would naturally have been suspicious of a Cipher that directed him to dig under Wye." For "wye" or, as terminally spelled, simply "y," is the Welsh for "river." Thus in Wales the "Towy" is "the spreading river." The Elwy is "the noisy river." The Llingwy is "the dark coloured river," etc. A direction in a cryptogram to "dig under wye" might mean only to dig under some river somewhere—a command that might well discourage a stouter heart and a braver credulity than possessed by the American gentlemen who have finally abandoned their coffer-dam and mud-shovels, and left us for parts unknown. But, although a slight one, there is a small and very attenuated connection between the Wye at this point and Lord Bacon. In 1607, Bacon, then being Solicitor General of England, was applied to give an opinion as to whether the shrievalty of Gloucestershire or the Council of Wales should be commanded to go to the expense of keeping in repair the old Chepstow bridge. The Wye is the geographical as well as the statutory boundary between Wales and England. The bridge, therefore, being between—and within as to each half of

it—the two jurisdictions. (Gloucester being the county of England exactly contiguous) would either fall into dangerous disrepair, or at the mercy of one or the other of the balliwicks, unless some statute or ordinance dealt summarily with the case. Mr. Solicitor-General Bacon held that either jurisdiction could repair the bridge, and thereafter maintain it in serviceable condition. And, having done so, could collect one moiety of the disbursement from the other shrievalty. But that it ought to be made a charge on each jurisdiction to see that the Chepstow bridge was kept serviceable and safe. But this legal opinion did not, it will be perceived, require Lord Bacon's personal presence at Chepstow-town. Nor is it anywhere intimated or suggested that his lordship ever was here at all. Still less that he undertook with no right to the territory to erect such hydraulic engines and structures as would have enabled him to bury anything in the bed of the river at this point. As to the absolute absence of any tradition or record that he ever did anything of the sort or asked anybody's permission to do so, it is unnecessary to comment further.

But that the late diggers selected an exceptionally romantic and lore-packed precinct for their holidays, there can be no doubt. Wales is indeed a miniature Switzerland. And the Welsh-English borderland might be well called a miniature. Yo Semite, with its river-traversed canons, and its perpendicular-rocked defiles. Besides, within a radius of five miles in either direction from Chepstow-town there are no less than twenty-five ruined castles or fortresses, built in the troubled days when England and Wales were at war—when, with all its military prowess, England could not subdue the intrepid Welshmen who, in the fastnesses of these canon and defiles, bade Englishmen defiance, as they had before time defied the legions Cæsar, to drive them out or compel them to allegiance. Moreover these castles were not only fortresses but military camps. For it was necessary not only to build impregnable fortresses, but protected strongholds for the soldiery necessary to man them, who must be maintained, so many leagues from their base, in a wild and trackless country with no roads or waterways or other communication with civilized England. It was of these castles, with their immense court-yards and messuages, all within castellated walls, that old Dr. Jonson spoke, when in emitting his habitual contempt for Scotland and all things Scotch, he said to Boswell, "Don't talk to me of your Scotch Castles, Sir. A Welsh castle-yard would hold all the castles in Scotland." (It may be worth mentioning as giving some idea of the possessions of an English nobleman, that all these castles—as well as the magnificent ruin,

Tintern Abbey barely five miles to the north of Chepstow—are the property of the Dukes of Beaufort).

But, apart from the exploitation of the American cryptologists which for the last twelfthmonth has awakened Chepstow-town from its thousand years of somnolence, the little town is well worthy a lingering visit from the tourist "procul negotiis" as Horatius Flaccus would have described it. For the origin of the tranquil town begins in the crepuscule of Fable or perhaps we should say—the Gotterdamerung—the twilight of the gods! King Arthur—he of the round table that was king of fairyland Britain (so named, by the way, from Brutus son of Æneas) was slain as say some authorities (only to be contradicted by other authorities) by King Lud (from whom Lud's Town—London). Then—following the same contradictable authorities—King Arthur's son Morgan fled to the south coast of Wales where he had been born, and from which he was named More Can—in Cymric "the manchild born by the sea." And the land became, as it is at present, called Gla Morgan. That is the Gla or Country of the Man who was born by the Sea!

Chepstow we indeed first hear of in Literature in Sir Walter Scott's version of the old Glamorgan War song "Cadlef Gwyr Morganwg."

"From Chepstaw's walls at dawn of morn
"We heard afar the bugle horn;
"And forth in banded pomp and pride
"Stout Clare and fiery Nevill ride,
"They swore their banners broad should gleam
"In crimson light on Rhymney's stream;
"They vowed Caerphilly's sod should feel
"The Norman charger's springing heel!
"And Chepstow's brides shall curse the toil
"That armed stout Clair for Cambrian broil
"And orphans long that art may rue
"For Nevill's war-horse forged the shoe!"

Who was Claire and who was Nevil would be as hard to say as it would be to tell what was the cause of the Thirty years' war which ended when the contestants who used to take their families along to the field found themselves tired of fighting or something else diverted their interest. These Welsh feuds were apt to be like the celebrated case in Rabelais that was submitted to all the learned universities in France, Germany and Spain, until

they all agreed to leave it to Charles the Fifth who decided that anybody who alluded to it again should be hung, drawn and quartered! The only tangible information is, that Claire was a something of Chepstow while Nevil was a something of Wales.

But tangible and interesting enough to atone, is the splendid ruin of Chepstow castle. Viewed from its river frontage or from over on the Welsh borderland, it appears—as indeed all these old castle ruins do appear, to rise perpendicularly from the river base, being built without discernable break between walls and rocky parapet—the whole, wall and rock,—forming a single sheer escarpment, until a modern engineer would be nonplussed to pronounce whether the forgotten builders used false works in their construction or managed to work within the perpendicular they erected. Standing on the present iron Chepstow bridge, successor of the one whose case was decided by Lord Bacon and a youngster of a few years less than an hundred years in age (its five graceful arches must have been a very early structure in iron, by the way), we get a noble but not so imposing a view of the sally-port and land side of this castle, stately and ivy grown but not frowning and formidable as is the view from the Welsh or "business" side. Here the visitor sees at one end of the curtain the round donjon tower, and, at the other the four-square "Merten" tower—as they stood when Merlin worked his enchantments and King Arthur and his knights sat at the Round Table still visible at Cäerlion on the Usk!

Across the huge court yard, in which great trees are still standing, is the square Marten's Tower, so called because here was imprisoned twenty years from 1660 to his death in 1680, Henry Marten, one of Cromwell's roundheads and a Regicide. He was sentenced with the other Regicides to death at the Restoration. But he, with nineteen others, surrendered himself upon Charles the Second's proclamation of amnesty, sending word to the king that as this was the first royal proclamation that he (Marten) had ever obeyed, he hoped that he should not be put to death for taking the king's word." The king seems to have regarded the message. At any rate he commuted Marten's sentence to imprisonment for life. Marten was even allowed the society of his wife and children, and except for the loss of his liberty, probably lived a happier life here than in the days when he was fighting and expounding against royal prerogative.

Perhaps Chepstow castle was selected as the gaol of Marten because it happened to be the only castle that Cromwell ever besieged in vain, capturing it only by starvation, and its garrison by strategy. Two hundred and sixty-three years ago its commander Sir Nicholas Kemeys with only

forty men held it until Cromwell left the siege in other hands and sought easier victories elsewhere. He left an order to a subordinate to starve Sir Nicholas out. When the garrison's last crust was gone, they asked a parley which was granted for a single day. But one of Cromwell's soldiers happened to see a boat moored under the river wall, and suspecting treachery, swam the river with a knife in his teeth and cut the rope half in two. Sure enough that night Sir Nicholas and his garrison of forty men embarked. But the rope parted, and all were caught and put to the sword. In the pavement of the room said to have been Marten's chamber is an iron ring which, the guide tells us, this identical boat was tied by the rope the soldier cut.

Marten lies buried in the old Church built in King Stephen's time as a chapel to an Abbey which seems to have disappeared and left no trace. The story is that the old Regicide was buried in its chancel. But a subsequent Vicar deeming it a desecration, had the remains removed from the chancel and placed under the pavement of the main aisle, so that worshippers should forever walk over the ashes of the man who had killed his King.

Chepstow itself is of the usual order of border towns. Its industries are small and local. Some ships or barges appear always to be building leisurely at its docks. But it is a kind of land in which it is always afternoon. If Lord Bacon wanted to bury manuscripts anywhere this is perhaps the last place he would have selected. Inaccessible—for there were no roads—sparsely inhabited where he could have otbained no workmen—and—according to the Baconian ciphers to themselves the least desirable for a man who wished to leave his reputation to the next Ages! But why should Bacon want to bury manuscripts anyhow? Who does bury manuscripts? Besides they had been printed—and were, therefore, rubbish and waste paper merely!

The fact that the present Duke and Duchess of Beaufort have not only encouraged your American cryptogrammatist, but that the Duke has himself provided the cost of the work must not be taken to mean that they expected more than an interesting excitement from the curious venture. His grace of course desired to retain control of the work upon his own premises, which he effectively did by assuming its expense. And to have refused the permission to dig would have been to leave the matter in doubt. Besides his grace, of course, feels himself a trustee for History; could hardly feel otherwise, being as he is the owner of twenty-five ruined castles, every one of which is a monument in English history. He is the owner also of Tin-

tern Abbey, and no visitor to that most splendid of British Abbeys can fail to appreciate the perfect access which every visitor enjoys, without espionage or intrusive ciceronage, to that wonderful precinct. Said a local antiquary (who begs me not to mention him by name) to me: "Your fellow countryman has discovered just what the Duke, as well as all of us, knew would be found. Just opposite, you see, there was an old Roman road crawling down that cliff. Why should the Romans build a road down to a river brink unless they thought to bridge the river at that point? But in order to build a bridge they must sink foundations for piers. Your countryman has simply found one of these pier-foundations. The other pier-foundation is visible at high tide just opposite. It seems impossible to believe that your fellow-countryman was not perfectly aware of these facts. Indeed, he was very plainly informed of them by persons whom I could name, let alone his grace, the Duke of Beaufort, who knew them perfectly well!"

Such, indeed then, are the romance and the traditions of old Chepstow on the Wye. But there is a distinguished cryptographer residential at the point d'appui of the new world and the new-old-world-Detroit. See what he has dragged up out of Cipherdom as to this same Chepstow on the Wye!

Out of the eighteen different cipher systems used by Bacon in the First Folio. He found, first: A passage in which Bacon said that one of the persons of a future generation that would decipher his works and discover his great secrets was to bear the name of "Owen."

This convinced him that he was on the right track. (For gentle reader, as will be shortly seen, this cryptographer's name is the good old Welsh, "Owen.") But confirmations strong as holy Writ, now followed fast and followed faster.

When Bacon wrote the Shakespeare Plays, did he print them or send them to the Theatre? By no means! He folded them up. Sealed them with his seal, and buried them in the bed of the River Wye at Chepstow. Why this particular sepulture? asks the reader. Or why any sepulture at all? Let the Bacon cipher answer: "He," (Lord Bacon) "knew that those were times when much was made of witchcraft, and as he had many enemies he felt that they might try to prove that he was a wizard, kill him and have all his writings destroyed. He, therefore, placed the manuscripts in boxes measuring 20 by 10 by 2 feet. Each one of these boxes, the doctor

says the cipher tells him, required six men to handle, and there were five boxes."

"The River Usk runs into the River Wye in such a manner as to cause anything that comes down it to ground on one of the shores. The vault was built, says the cipher, so that anything coming down the river would float to its opening. When all was ready the boat was loaded, floated down, tied up to the vault, the boxes unloaded, the contents buried and the whole sealed over. The vault is of concrete and cement, absolutely waterproof. The boxes are also said to be proof against destruction as long as they remain buried. Three years ago Dr. Owen went to Boston, where he communicated his discoveries to many scholars of that city and gained the backing for an expedition that it was hoped would unearth the treasures and prove that Shakespeare was an impostor."

"At that time he told his friends, although he had never been in England, just where the manuscripts could be found. He described the scenery about the vault side, diagrammed many of the castles where Bacon had been and told of certain marks that Bacon had put on the masonry pertaining to those castles. All this found in the cipher."

"He also told them that it was to St. Albans, near Wales, that Bacon was sent by Queen Elizabeth when she wanted to get rid of him at court. In detail he told his friends of the scenery around the St. Albans represented as being named in the cipher. When he finally went to England, financed by American capital, he spent much of his early time in finding out if the cipher was correct in regard to these minor details."

"First of all he established to his own satisfaction that it really was to the St. Albans near Wales that Bacon went, instead of the St. Albans near London, from which he originally took his title of Marquis St. Albans, as had hitherto been supposed. Dr. Owen proved this by passages in Shakespeare and the cipher describing the scenery and territory thereabouts."

"Dr. Owen then went on to investigate the marks on various castles that he told his friends in the United States he would find. Even confident as he was before he went to England, he was much surprised to discover things just as he had expected. What these will lead to has not been told to any one out of his immediate circle, but it is known that every mark is the basis for the computation of certain angles that when found will point to spots where things of great worth may be located if the cipher may be believed."

"For instance, it is known that Bacon spent or did away with more money than has ever been accounted for. He also possessed valuable jewels

and owned the most comprehensive private library of his time. No satisfactory explanation having ever been given as to the whereabouts of these things, Dr. Owen claims that the cipher has acquainted him with all and that as soon as he digs up the manuscripts he will be able to find the other objects."

"One of the first things that Dr. Owen did when he went to England was to get in touch with the Duke of Beaufort, who is a great Baconian student and has much of Bacon's former realty. Before the duke the Detroit Owen laid out all his discoveries and told of his expectation, winning over the Duke who offered not only to let the doctor tear down his castles if he desired, but offered to put up the larger part of the expenses of the search."

"An engineer was employed and the work was begun on determinnig the location of the vault under the Wye. To begin with, it was necessary to locate certain marks that Bacon is supposed to have placed on the masonry of Chepstow, as castle recorded in the cipher." Etc., etc., etc.

But we fain would not weary the reader. There are reams more of this sort of rubbish—and even were our pages as limitless as our patience. Readers would rebel. And of all this, of all the herculean labours of Bacon's workmen in coffer damming the Wye—toiling in with the huge boxes of manuscripts; building the mausoleum over them, closing and secreting their approaches, removing the coffer dams and letting the torrent back to its native bed—of all this not a mention ever in men's mouths, but only in a cipher that has been buried for three centuries to stretch out like a mortmain unremoved until the year of Grace (or is it the year of Fable)? the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and eleven!

But anyhow it has given Chepstow a world-wide advertisement, and such an event in the annals of this little town will go into its archives and be on record no doubt for another hundred years.

George Memminger.

[It is only fair to Mr. Memminger, and perhaps to ourselves, to state that the above article was accepted by us before the fiasco at Dr. Owen's Chepstow diggings had become known upon this side of the ocean.—Editors New Shakespeareana.]

MARGINALIA

A LATE ISSUE OF OUR LONDON CONTEMPORARY "BACONIANA" PRINTS the following:

To the Editor of Baconiana. DEAR SIR:—I was surprised to read your strictures upon Dr. Appleton Morgan in your April issue.

Perhaps Dr. Morgan rejects the "ciphers" for the same reason that he accepts the Bacon authorship theory—that is to say, because he is a lawyer and a student of evidence. Don't let us forget Dr. Morgan's immense services to the Baconian propositus. When "The Shakespeare Myth" appeared in 1877 there was no text-book on the subject except Judge Holmes's ponderous volume, which had dropped stillborn from the press because it was almost as recondite and unreadable—not to say as unintelligible—as poor Delia Bacon's "Philosophy of Shakespeare's Plays Unfolded," which Hawthorne said that nobody ever read (Judge Holmes's book, as a matter of fact, has been dropped from the catalogue of its publishers, Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin, and Company), and except a pamphlet or a newspaper article now and then, the question was unknown.

Dr. Wyman's "Bibliography," with all his research, counting every allusion that could be forced that way, could enumerate less than thirty prior to that date. Dr. Morgan's book popularized the subject. Here in America, at least, newspapers and magazines began to discuss it, and it became a favourite theme in college and literary clubs for amateur debates.

"The Shakespearean Myth" went through four editions—a record no work upon the Baconian theory has ever approached. It practically introduced the Bacon theory into Germany in the German translation of Dr. Karl Muller-Mylne, and although President of the New York Shakespeare Society, Dr. Morgan even in that "orthodox" society, preserves his loyalty to Bacon, and to inspire a like loyalty in others. I think we Baconians cannot afford to lose Dr. Morgan. Our propaganda has been hard hit lately by the "Button Moulder." Bompas, Begley, William Theobald, Judge Webb,

Lord Penzance, W. H. Edwards, Judge Holmes, Edwin Reed, Judge Stotsenburg—all these have joined the majority.

None of these, no more than White, Castle, or Greenwood—who, I believe ,are still living—were "cipherists." It is policy to read out of our Guild the few wheel-horses we have left because they happen to be of the old faith?

So far as I can see, the question the cipherists ask is not "Did Bacon write the plays?" but "Did Bacon claim the plays?" It seems to me that the first of the above questions is the only one in which—if in either—the world is interested to the slightest degree.

And permit me to call your attention to the fact that the recent discoveries of Dr. Wallace in your Public Records are a remarkable confirmation of Dr. Morgan's conjecture in "The Shakespearean Myth" that William Shakespeare was the owner, by purchase, and stage-mounter of the plays. Certainly nobody who ever read that work can deny that this was the "new" or "editorial" or "compromise" theory that Dr. Morgan first proposed in that work, and, in a sense, elaborated in his "Some Shakespearean Commentators" of two years later.

Yours in the Baconian faith,

J. Harold McChesney.

21 Webster Avenue, Newark, New Jersey, August 21st, 1910.

[No objection was taken to the rejection of cyphers by Dr. Morgan. He is entitled to his opinion. The "strictures," if so the remarks in Baconian may be designated, were solely directed against Dr. Morgan's intolerance and vituperation towards those who consider alleged discoveries of cypher should be investigated, and to these alone. No comment was made on the opinions he held. It is not a question, as the writer suggests, of whether Baconians can afford to lose Dr. Morgan. That gentleman has never been a whole-hearted Baconian. His autobiography, recently published, makes it clear that he is not of the Baconian fold. Dr. Wallace's much-vaunted discoveries do not yield the slightest confirmation of any theory so void of foundation as that William Shakespere was "the owner by purchase and stage mounter of the plays." They shed no light on the point at issue in the controversy. The writer of the so-called "strictures" has never been convinced of the sufficiency of the evidence in favour of the Donnelly cypher, Dr. Ward Owen's word cypher, or of Mrs. Gallup's Biliteral cypher.—Ed.]

[This Editor's picture of so liberal-minded, dignified and placid a gen-

tleman as Dr. Morgan, as given to "intolerance and vituperation," will appeal to the sense of humour of Dr. Morgan's friends, and especially to readers of this Quarterly.—Editors NEW SHAKESPEAREANA.]

THE METROPOLITAN STAGE HAS WITNESSED DURING THP WINTER AND Spring an ambitious attempt to revive the Morality of mediaeval times. The late Walter Browne (not before largely known as a playwright, and who died the very day that his crowning triumph had its premiere) conceived in his "Everywoman" a modern Morality that should follow the trend of the mediaeval article, but use modern machinery, paraphernalia, localities and mise en scene. The experiment provoked curiosity and its producers risked ridicule, indifference and failure. But for five months in New York City; and (for a brief week each) in three other cities; the play has packed its theatres and stopped only because the heated term compelled the management out of mercy to the actors to forbear. The production is in every sense an agreeable surprise alike to public and critics. Far from being prolix, stilted and archaic, as its designation of a "modern morality play" may have suggested to many, it proved to be real and effective drama in the guise of allegory, but operatic in its texture and manner of interpretation, ingenious and powerful. It is a long way from the conventional drama so common to the time, and tells a story that is unclouded by its lofty symbolism, which has both an aesthetic and ethical purpose as well as an intimate application to contemporary life. Also, it is well acted by a well chosen company, opulently mounted and splendidly stage managed.

It is unfortunate to attempt to describe the plot, for a necessarily brief outline is sure to cloud rather than reveal the best merits of the work. In general it proceeds through five canticles, or acts, to trace the wandering of woman through the treacherous world of pleasure in her search for love, and to dramatically set forth the temptations by which she is beset and the reclaiming influences which Conscience throws around her. One of the scenes pictures faithfully the revels of a New Year's eve on Broadway, and in the gilded lobster palaces which line that highway of pleasure.

Whether the play would have succeeded as a curiosity or no, or without its opulent setting, have passed the credit of a mere succes d' estime need not be discussed. But the management left nothing of that kind to question— It intrusted to one of the most beautiful women on the American stage—Miss Laura Nelson Hall, the creation of the Title-role, "Everywoman." Miss Hall presented always a striking figure, graceful in pose and gesture, always significant in action, and in every item and syllable of her

part, showed her fine realization of the archaic precedents of the character, as well as the demands of the modern prototype entrusted to her reading. Her part required not only genius but faith and zeal. Longer than "Hamlet": without an exit in any of the five acts (or canticles as the author named them, though not from the old model either) "Everywoman's" part in endurance if in nothing else, would have been upon an American stage unique. "Everyman" of course, was only a play at all, when "Everyman" (the character) was on the scene. But in the trifling time in which "Everyman" (the play) could be played with modern machinery the actor impersonating him had an easy length of time. But, in the four hours required for Everywoman (the play) for an actress to never leave the stage, was in itself an achievement. It is none too much to say that Miss Hall no less than Mr. Browne, made possible this Dramatic service to the twentieth century—the creation of the only morality play that has been attempted in five hundred years. And the records of American drama will hold the fact. No student of Drama could do himself the injustice of foregoing an opportunity to see "Everywoman."

In "Shakespeare's Totdenmask." [New York, Lemcke and Buechner] Dr. Paul Wislicenus argues enthusiastically for the veracity of the Kesselstadt "Death Mask."

Of all the alleged portraits of Shakespeare, the so-called death mask is perhaps the only one which possesses features of sufficient charm to do no overt violence to one's mental image of the poet—unless it be the Chandos portrait, but that has ear-rings! Unfortunately, the death mask is of somewhat obscure pedigree. It was found in a Mainz junk-shop by Ludwig Becker, a portrait-painter, in the middle of the last century; it had been picked up by Count Kesselstadt on a journey to England at the end of the eighteenth century; it has the date of Shakespeare's death, 1616, scratched into the plaster of Paris; that is really all we know of it.

The Baconians have made the subject of Shakespeare's potraits always their peculiar province, but Dr. Wislicenus attacks them with fervor equal to their own. He attacks, too, Mrs. Stope's theory that the present bust of the Stratford monument was set up in 1746 in place of an earlier one, without pen and paper, to be seen pictured in Dugdale's "Warwickshire" (1656). The Dugdale portrait he describes as that of a failing hypochondriac, pressing a thick pillow to his abdomen in evident physical distress; a bad and carless sketch, as were those in Rowe's (1709) and Bell's (1788) Shakespeares, which show quite different heads. The production in Pope's edi-

tion (1725), however, agrees closely with the present. This, thinks Dr. Wislicenus, is the original form of the bust and of the monument. The Stratford bust he believes to have been made from the Kesselstadt death mask, with the eyes opened, the cheeks fattened, and an expression of bourgeois geniality spread over the countenance by a local artisan. Apart from the discussion of Mrs. Stope's theory the book contains little that is new. The nineteen reproductions of alleged Shakespeare portraits, are excellent.

The activity of our fellow-countryman, Dr. Wallace, who travelled five thousand miles to demonstrate to Englishmen what they could have found under their noses if they had taken the trouble to look, seems to have produced its effect. According to a late issue of the London "Globe" there has been found in the London "Sessions House" the record of the proceedings in which Ben Jonson pleaded his clergy. This Sessions House has been used for the work of the country for a hundred years and contains records and other historical documents which go back to the year 1549, when Edward VI. was King, and a representative of the *Globe* was privileged to examine some of them. Perhaps the most interesting is the original indictment of Ben Jonson for manslaughter. The name, by the way, is spelled Johnson. Ben Jonson was arraigned at the Old Bailey in October, 1598, for the manslaughter of Gabriel Spencer in a duel at "Shordiche with a certain sword of iron and steel called a rapiour of the price of 3s., which he then and there had in his right hand and held drawn, feloniously and wilfully struck the same Gabriel then and there with the aforesaid sword, giving to the same Gabriel Spencer in and upon the same Gabriel's right side a mortal wound of the depth of six inches and of the breadth of one inch, of which mortal wound the same Gabriel Spencer then and there died instantly."

The document is headed with a statement that the prisoner "confesses the indictment, asks for the book, reads like a clerk, is marked with the letter T and is delivered according to the form of the statute," &c. This in modern language means that the author of "Every Man in His Humour" claimed the privilege of the clergy, which was extended to laymen who could read, of escaping the hangman for a first offence on deing branded on the left thumb with a T, which was commonly known as the Tyburn T. The writer adds: Ben Jonson, apparently by bribing the jailer, had the operation of branding performed with cold steel, as no marks of branding were found on his body at his death."

This remarkable document, which has for three hundred years escaped

the poet's biographers, was found among a number of fragmentary rolls. It had lost its dated wrapper, was wet and decayed, and was far on the road to rottenness when it was rescued from its oblivion and submitted by the experts of the Middlesex County Council to a process of cleaning and restoring. Dr. Wallace's finds, it may be noted, have invariably preserved the date-marks. Of course their absence in this case will raise a question of fraud, or forgery. But there is no apparent reason why this discovery should not be veritable. We have known always that Ben Jonson escaped hanging in the easy way prescribed by law—by taking his benefit of clergy.

And now enters formally a new Claimant for the honour of the Authorship of the Shakespeare Plays! This time no less a magnificence that his Satanic Highness the Devil! Such of us as delighted to think that the long word HONORIFICABILITUDINITATIBUS had been reduced to its elemental "Initio hi ludi Fr. Bacono" by Dr. Platt, and to its equally elementary "Hi Ludi F. Baconis Nata tuiti orbi" by Sir Edward Lawrence, will regret to learn that Sir Edward offered a reward of one hundred guineas if any other anagram than these two which announced the Baconian authorship of the Plays could be tortured out of the long word. A Mr. Beevor stimulated by the reward has however managed an anagram that announces, not Bacon's, but Ben Jonson's authorship: vidilicet: "I Ionson hi libri tui aut ficti a d———" Which being translated is "Go to—Jonson, these books are either yours or invented by the devil!" Hardly worth five hundred dollars one might say but valuable as admitting a new claimant or rather two new claimants for the authorship "Hi Ludi!" So now we have as the author of the Play, our choice between Shakespeare, Jonson, or the Devil. But as Ben Jonson has carelessly left behind him the Plays he acknowledges that he did write, they cut his claim out instanter! So now we have only left of this revelation—The Devil!

Mr. Robert Atwater Smith, our always alert, unreconstructed and unterrified Baconian correspondent (who spells Shakespeare—the Stratford gentleman "Willm-Shagsper," and defies all the Statutes of the Realm dealing with lése mageste to stop him) writes us to demand an accounting with Dr. Morgan for saying in his Interview in The New York Evening Post of May 20th, 1911, that "I know of no character in Biography whose every movement is so perfectly recorded as Lord Bacon's. Not Napoleon's nor Washington's more so." Writes Mr. Smith: "I would like to inquire

how much of Bacon's life is recorded by Spedding previous to 1590 or even before 1600? Parker Woodward in his books has shown how Spedding 'slid over' the first forty years of Bacon's life. What did Spedding tell of Bacon's life in France from 1576 to 1579? What of the next ten years? In Baconiana of April, 1911, a gap of nearly two years, 1580-92, is unearthed by Mr. Woodward, and the probable date of a letter written to Bacon in France by Sir Thomas Bodley (1545-1613). Much more can be said on this subject but these few items will go for a 'starter.' I have not studied the life of Napoleon to any extent, but I have engaged myself in studying up the American ancestry of President Washington, and I have been surprised to see how little original research the various writers have given to the matter. They merely copied what the previous writers had stated in their books, perhaps they added an item or two, but that was all. I have dug out more information concerning Washington's ancestry in America than can be found in any life of Washington, from Jared Sparks to Senator Lodge." Mr. Smith is a capital genealogist, but his logic sometimes halts. He overlooks the secundum quid. Dr. Morgan said, "I know of," etc., etc. The wisest of men—Solomon in all his glory—sometimes generalized hastily.

The New York Shakespeare Society announces with deep regret the deaths of two of its prominent members. Henry Abbey, of Kingston, N. Y., who died on Wednesday night, June 7, at Tenafly, N. J., in his seventieth year. Mr. Abbey was the author of many volumes of verse, which have been from time to time reviewed in these pages. In the '60s Mr. Abbey wrote for the New York *Leader,* and for a time he was editor of the Orange, N. J., *Spectator.* He was born in Rondout in 1842, the son of Stephen and Caroline Vail Abbey. His father was a descendant of John Knox, the Scotch reformer. An ancestor of his mother came over in the Mayflower and is said to have married a daughter of Massasoit. In 1865 Mr. Abbey married Mary Louise Du Bois of Kingston. She died in 1889.

Also the death at Atlantic City on or about February first, 1911, of Richard L. Ashhurst, Esq., for thirty years Vice Dean of The Philadelphia Shakespeare Society, and an early and valued contributor to New Shakespeareana. Mr. Ashhurst was a gentleman of distinguished ancestry and presence, and a prominent and highly esteemed citizen of Philadelphia, of whose Bar he had been a distinguished member for fifty-one years. Mr. Ashhurst's parents were Philadelphians, but he was born in Naples, Italy, during their temporary residence there. He studied at the University of

Pennsylvania, was graduated in 1856 and was admitted to the bar in 1859. He served two terms as Postmaster of Philadelphia. He was Adjutant with the rank of Colonel of the One Hundred and Fiftieth Pennsylvania Regiment in the Civil War, and was brevetted Major for gallant conduct at the battle of Chancellorsville. He was wounded at Gettysburg and retired at the close of the war with the rank of Colonel.

Books Received

356. The American of the Future and Other Essays. By Brander Matthews. Cloth, 12mo., pp. 400. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

359. The Classical Element in the Shakespeare Plays. By William Theobold. Cloth, 8vo., pp. 410. London: Robert Banks.

365. The Social Position in London of William Shakespeare. By Henry Pemberton, Jr. Paper, 8vo., pp. 200. Philadelphia: The Numismatic and Antiquarian Society.

368. The Mystery of Hamlet. By Robert Russell Benedict. Cloth, 12mo., pp. 120. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co.

369. Everywoman—Her Pilgrimage In Quest of Love. A Modern Morality Play. By Walter Browne. 12mo., cloth, pp. 121. New York: The H. K. Fly Company.

370. The Autobiography of William Shakespeare. By W. C. Alexander. Cloth, 12mo., pp. 200. New York: The Baker and Taylor Company.

356. These essays by Dr. Matthews add to, possibly detract, nothing from the reputation, which is as it is—of the prolific Professor of Drama in Columbia University. The flavor of the Class-room (possibly everything with which we are favored from this source is revisal of Dr. Matthews' lectures to his sophomores) like the trail of the serpent, is over it all. Dr. Matthews should be very effective in the pulpit from his love of texts! His wont is to begin with "It was the witty remark of ———." "It was the acute reflection of ———." "My friend ——— once said to me," etc., etc., etc. We have long expected serious work from Dr. Matthews. We are not perhaps to be disappointed.

352. The late William Theobold, like his distinguished brother, Dr. R. M. Theobold, was a staunch Baconian. This work and his brother's "Shakespeare's Plays in Baconian Light," are of similar construction, to wit, the tracing of passages in the plays to a Classical source; and—in most cases

successfully—they demonstrate such exhaustive presumption of source as leads nowhere but to the alien authorship theory. These books are not widely read by our day and generation, which has come to mildly accept the Baconian Theory and to smile at the handful who still debate it. But they are all placed in our great Libraries and are the res gestae for future protagonists. For that the next ages will very seriously consider the question we don't care to doubt!

365. The Social position of Shakespeare which Mr. Pemberton again debates ought to be pretty well settled by this time. If Mr. Pemberton's question is, whether Shakespeare was—in the last analysis—entitled to his social position he ought to write a book instead of a pamphlet. In what American or British or Continental city are there not people who make social claims that wont stand too close examination? And who bothers himself about it? Shakespeare never seems to have made any claim about anything—unless his application in his father's name for a Coat of Arms was a "claim!" But the ambition to wear coat armour is not a disgraceful or non ignoble ambition. And who was better born? On his mother's side, an Arden. On his father's side a Griffin (Griffith or Gryphon—the name of the legendary monster that is the national signet and flag device of Wales), and descendant as we have shown in these pages (Vol. I, p. —) from Gwenned, the first King of all Wales, A. D. 605, what is a more ancient line than this? But Mr. Pemberton's brochure is lively, strenuous and intelligent.

368. Mr. Benedict adds one more "Mystery of Hamlet." He has not read all his predecessor Hamlet-Mystery makers. And who can blame him? There are ten thousand of them. And if he had read half of his predecessors he would not have had written his own book!

369. To require that every play written to be acted should be Literature, would be to demand that every playwright should be a Shakespeare, an Ibsen, or a Goethe. Walter Browne was none of these, but he was an ambitious writer of plays, and he made this play he has called "Everywoman", actually only Morality play produced in five hundred years. To undertake the metier of the sixteenth century stage with its Unities, using New York City for the Place, to-day for the Time, and to grasp the Event from current manners is to be both original and ambitious. To have succeeded at all in this ambition suggests to a critic that he discover somebody else who has done it any better, before he apply anything but hospitable literary criticism to the only man who has done it at all! While a writer lives, said Dr. Johnson, we estimate him by his worst performance—after he is dead we estimate him

by his best. And Walter Browne is dead! Judging Everywoman as this table must judge it—as Literature—however, we must begin by admitting that it is serious work. And sans criticism at all, proceed to indicate wherein it is a real "Morality," and wherein demands of modern stage exigency have mitigated the formatives of its model.

The medieval priest who essayed to teach the vulgar, to whom print was a closed book, what he fancied they ought to know, became himself an evolution. He first gave them the Miracle Play, whose clumsy realism revolts and disgusts. He soon substituted the Mystery, which being clumsy allegory, fell as far above the vulgar comprehension as the Miracle Play, after awhile fell below it. And, right here the actors themselves aided the priest in his evolution. Noting that their tired audiences brightened up when the dreary performance was relaxed by an interlude in which the comedy characters (the Devil, Sin and Vice) were allowed to improvise horse-play—these actors soon set up for themselves and gave the people all "interlude," with no Miracle or Mystery at all about it, for their pence. And, to save the audience that discarded both for the "Interlude" the priest invented the Morality, which was incarnation of an attribute into a person of the stage, adding not only characteristic, but Plot.

But as neither Miracle, Mystery nor Morality attempted any Literary merit, neither need Mr. Browne have attempted any. As a matter of fact the reader will find that he has attempted it and has come mightily near succeeding in his attempt.

"Everywoman" starts out in her Youth, her Beauty, and her Modesty, to find the love that everywoman craves. Her Youth, her Beauty and her Modesty are incarnated in three graceful maidens, respectively, and another of Everywoman's attributes, her Conscience, is also incarnated in a rather peaked and stiff young lady in the garb of a nun whom "Everywoman" begins at once to snub. So far the piece is a Morality, pure enough. If Mr. Browne's work is to be criticised, at all, the criticism begins just here. He has introduced a Character called "Nobody," who threatens to throw us into a state of nervous prostration if we try to find out what he is here for; what he stands for, and what part he takes in the movement of the play! As a Pun he gives the lie to his every speech. He says that Nobody warns Everywoman, etc., when as a matter of fact every hortatory character in the piece, including Nobody himself, warns her, until his particular warning is as superfluous as Falstaff's second shirt. Equally silly are such speeches as, that Nobody will wipe her tears away—Nobody will ease her sorrow on his breast, etc., when "Nobody" (the character) does nothing of the sort, and

when—as a matter of fact—her tears *are* wiped away by somebody and upon somebody else's breast she does find surcease of sorrow. Except that he is always where he is not wanted, and that no other character in the play pays any attention to him, and so adds variety (as did "the lone fisherman" in the "Evangeline" of a generation ago who, was always on the stage whether the scene were a drawing-room in New York, the pyramids of Egypt or the banks of the beautiful blue Danube)—he has no raison d'etre whatever: And he is not only in the play, but outside of it. He steps from the dramatic action out before the audience as deftly as the hero of a farce-burlesque walks through ten solid feet of prison wall! He runs with the hare and hunts with the hounds. He is in the penetralia of "Everywoman's" home, and, anon, telling the reader or the audience all about what is going on, although they know it as well as he does having just before read it or seen it done. Most bewildering of all is his last speech as Epilogue, telling the reader that Nobody is to blame for Everywoman's ruin, when there are at least ten people of the play that are directly to blame for it. If this be a Pun, then the value of a Pun lies not in its apposition!

If Mr. Browne had given Nobody's speeches, which are dignified and acceptable per se, to say, Conscience or Truth, both of whom have no other cue than to warn "Everywoman", then one or the other might he have, in Shakespearean sort, spoken Prologue, Epilogue, or even Apologue, we think. But this is only a concession, and can be granted, as can also the one paramount departure from the model, to wit: In the sixteenth century the fifth act—where Everywoman seeks again her own foyer—her fireside—and finds Love, whom she has sought in vain in the theatre, in dissipation and in the street, awaiting her there—would have been anti-climax! The Morality of that date would have nailed the lesson by having her, borne shrieking, in the fourth act, to the lazar-house, the jail or to her tomb! But Mr. Browne's Morality has no awful moral. The only Moral to Mr. Browne's Morality being that a young woman should not seek her lover but should wait discreetly at home until her lover should seek her, (one which will not perhaps please the suffragites). Of the old Morality moral against sin, and awful exemplification of its consequences—Mr. Browne has no whit! Everywoman's slips are only an experience. She still wins love and happiness. And so the piece is really, as Mr. Browne has written it, nearer to the Elizabethan concept of a Masque than to a Priest-play of the earlier date.

But these are, as we say, concessions.

Mr. Browne calls Love, "King Love The First," which gives himself an opportunity for this.

EVERYWOMAN. Art thou indeed a king . . . where is thy throne?
LOVE. Within thy heart.
EVERYWOMAN. Where is thy crown?
LOVE. At thy feet.

Which is mighty near to poetry!

In the second act the banal speeches are given (as Shakespeare gave his banal speeches) to the banal characters. These speeches are metalic and biting in their gibe at stage exigencies, and leave a bad taste in the mouth, as compared with the mellow and genial humour of Pinero in the speeches he gives to the actors who, in "Trelawney of the Wells," are burlesquing themselves. But "Everywoman's" lines atone. And there is in them always even in her triumphs, a note of pathos that is the more intense for being subordinated always to her perspective at the moment she speaks them.

From a stage point of view, the appearance of Flattery, a courtier, in place of the reflection when "Everywoman" looks into her mirror; and of the ballet—under excuse of the rehearsal of a ballet on the stage of the playhouse, seem to us real tours d' addresse!

But our readers will unnecessarily deny themselves a real item of dramatic education if they fail to see the acted play. For a play written (as Everywoman was written) to be acted, supplies by mise en scene much that, in a play made for the library, must be expressed in words. Mr. Puff in "The Critic", saved a vast amount of rhetoric about the rising sun gliding the eastern hemisphere by the simple device of making a clock strike five.

Mr. Browne has built better than he knew. He has bettered any Morality that was ever written. Had he called his work a Masque, modelled upon Comus, there would have been just as many cavillers, and just as many to admit, as we honestly do, that it is good imitative work, as when he choose to call itself a Morality, founded upon Everyman! Everywoman impresses us as serious work and as a stage asset!

370. The Autobiography of Shakespeare. By W. C. Alexander. 12mo., pp. 123. New York: The Baker and Taylor Co.

Mr. W. C. Alexander, writes to a correspondent of NEW SHAKESPEAREANA in a private note that he solemnly desires to be taken literally in this book, that he has warrant for all that he says but admits that he has no absolute proof and so does not reveal at present all that he actually has by way of corroboration, etc. He adds that he has prepared a memorandum and placed it among his papers with instructions to his executors as to publishing it. Mr. Alexander's address is Holly Lodge Upper Parkfields, Putney, London, S. W., and he adds that he is seventy-two years old.

With this letter before us we read Mr. Alexander's "Autobiography of

Shakespeare" with more than the casual note than we give to mere random vagaries about the persisting miracle of Shakespeare. In this "Autobiography" William Shakespeare says "I was born in the city of Warwicke," Mr. Alexander's subject is made to say, "and my father's name was Richard. His father's name was Thomas Little, and he changed the name of Little to Shakespere on the entreaty of my grandfather's brother, John Shakespere of Warwicke. He was a Hollander, born at Utrecht, and was a small man of many parts—a ripe scholar and philosopher and lover of books."

By way of annotation Mr. Alexander tells us, there was a confusion of Shakespeares, and that the son of John, usually referred to by biographers, "was not William Shakespeare the poet, but William who became the wastrel and poacher and stroller and soldier. He it was who was the 'oft whipt and sometimes imprisoned,' as Archdeacon Davies wrote late in the seventeenth century, and who 'was given to much unluckiness in stealing venison and rabbits.'"

This outlaw William did worse, according to our author, for "he was the reckless or besotted youth who, in his cups, or for money, or vanity, or because he intended to go and fight in the Low Countries, was enticed into the marriage contract with Anne or Agnes Hathaway."

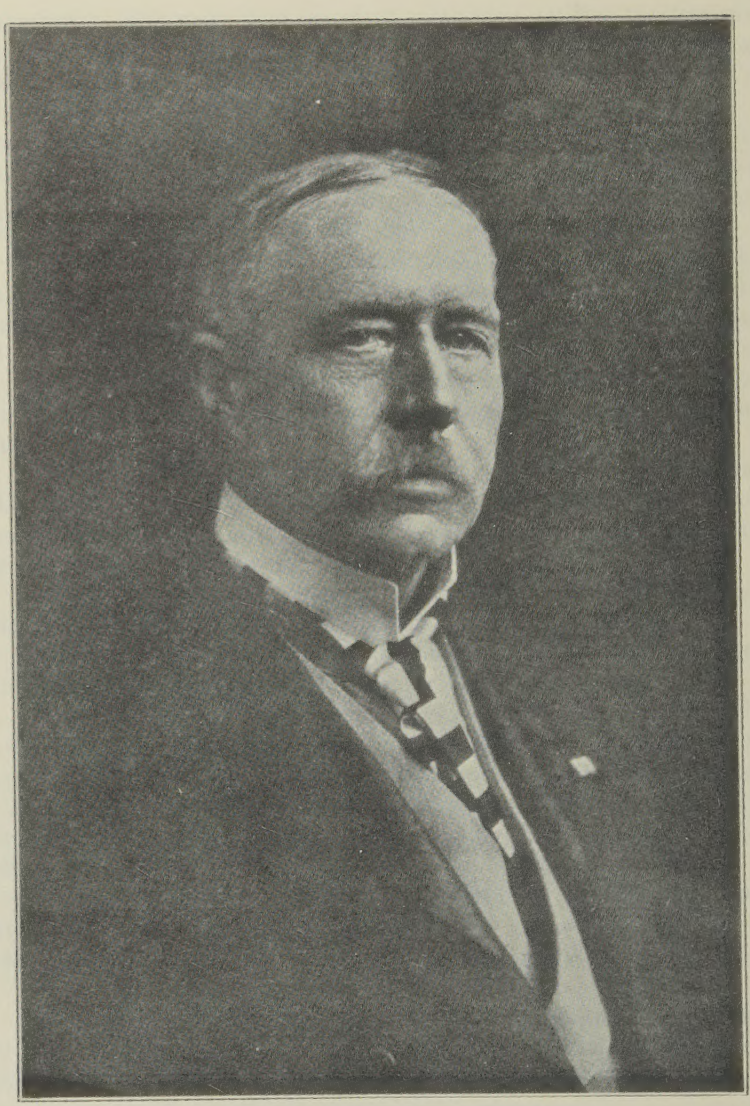
In other words Mr. Alexander seems to us to attain positively much of what doubting Thomases have conjectured, hinted or suggested. We hope that his executors will be authorized to publish Mr. Alexander's memoranda without waiting to become qualified by Mr. Alexander's demise.

[Exactly as we go to press comes the London Illustrated News of July 1, 1911, announcing the manufacture of yet one more "Shakespeare Death-Mask" which satisfies every possible requirement. Like the Kesselstadt, it is "discovered" in a rubbish shop, purchased for a song, (vidillicet, three shillings,) and has reddish human hair clinging to it. Unlike the Kesselstadt, however, it has no inconvenient details, such as place or date of "discovery," name of seller or purchaser, etc., to interfere with its authenticity. Should any of these specifications be supplied by the date of our next issue, we shall punctilliously report them, be the consequences what they may.]

***The Editors cannot undertake to return unused manuscript, though they will endeavor to do so if self-directed, stamped envelope is enclosed therewith.

All manuscripts submitted *must be type-written.*

Address all matters intended for The Editors, Books for Review, etc., NEW SHAKESPEAREANA, P. O. Box 250, SOMERVILLE, NEW JERSEY.



Gessford, Photo *Permission of Hertwell Stafford.*

DR. APPLETON MORGAN

[Founder and ex-President of the New York Shakespearean Society on his Sixty-sixth birth day, October 2, 1911.]